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SUPPLEMENTARY BRIEFING NOTES ON ANTARCTICA FOR THE COMMANDER,
U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT FORCE, ANTARCTICA

1. Strategic and military value of Antarctica within the restrictive scope of the Antarctic Treaty.

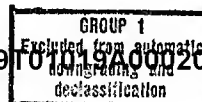
a. The Treaty limitations combined with the exercise of inspection effectively precludes the development of military installations and nuclear stock piles, and therefore prevents the use of Antarctica either as a military staging area or as a missile-launch area (assuming the use of the ICBM in place of the MRBM).

b. The strategic value of Antarctica to the USSR in its military aspects is difficult to assess. In terms of conventional air-sea operations under conditions of military hostilities, no agreed U.S. judgment exists that the Antarctic has any strategic importance. In this early phase of the space and missile age, no strategic value of Antarctica has as yet been identifiable.

c. The USSR could legitimately develop within the Treaty restrictions a sophisticated missile and satellite tracking facility. Tracking data could be utilized during periods of peace or war to improve orbit prediction of U.S. satellites for their destruction over the USSR. The USSR does not now have the tracking facilities in Antarctica required for this mission.

d. Whether such advanced tracking facility would have any value either to an orbital bombing platform or to an extended-range ballistic missile system is not foreseeable at this time. Neither system is currently

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envisaged in U.S. estimates of Soviet weapons system development through 1970. If either system were to be developed in the future, Soviet geodetic and gravimetric research will have been well advanced in relating points in Antarctica to their world geodetic system.

2. U.S. gains from current Antarctic operations.

a. The U.S. is maintaining its long-established position of leadership in Antarctic operations through a respected, comprehensive, scientific research program. While not as spectacular as space operations, U.S. Antarctic achievements make a quiet but solid input to general U.S. pre-eminence.

b. The presence of the U.S. Navy is a source of reassurance to our southern hemisphere allies. On the other hand, the presence of the U.S. Navy in U.S. operations is vulnerable to distortions of Communist propaganda in identifying U.S. activities as inspired by military interests and objectives. There is no evidence that the southern hemisphere Communists have utilized this militaristic theme in any of their anti-U.S. activities.

c. The U.S. Navy benefits from valuable cold-weather operating experience. This is recognized and feared by the USSR and probably accounts for their continued, though moderate, criticism of the presence of U.S. military personnel in U.S. operations. They would probably like to see such training benefits eliminated.

d. U.S. scientific activities in Antarctica are vital in the Communist-originated race with the Free World for scientific and technical supremacy. If the U.S. had not been active in Antarctica since the arrival of the Soviets, the U.S. lag by now would be large and in time context

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could not be overcome.

e. The forcing of the USSR--a closed society--to share scientific data through a Treaty obligation is significant in denying net Soviet gains in the "science race", and in contributing to the erosion of the "closed society" restrictions.

3. U.S. benefits from a close association with the USSR.

a. Direct observation of U.S. cold-weather capability (e.g. Tucker Snocat; C-130) has helped to inspire respect among the Soviets.

b. The demonstration of free acceptance by U.S.--civilian and military--personnel over the years has made an unquestioned positive impact on a cross-section of Soviet citizens, which now amount to a sizeable number. This has helped to put the lie to the basic theme of Soviet propaganda against the U.S.

c. These positive benefits are an underlying factor in the possible extension of cooperative U.S.-Soviet relations to the Arctic Basin. This could eventually become a vehicle for a demarche in the Arctic, perhaps even along the lines of the Eisenhower Arctic disarmament proposal.

d. Both Soviet and U.S. leaders have cited Antarctic relations as concrete evidence of growing political understanding. Most recently, Senator Fulbright (Town Meeting of the World, 27 May 1964, an international Telstar TV program between Europe and the U.S.) specifically cited friendly Antarctic relations as one of several examples demonstrating changes in Soviet attitudes.

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